STATEMENT IN SUPPORT

A School Year Like No Other Demands More Resources & Partners: Afterschool & Community Partners Can Help

We are deeply concerned about the impact of social isolation on our children and youth.

Children best connect, learn, and thrive when they are with peers and caring adults. Virtual learning is not possible or successful for ***all*** students. In order for our economy to recover, parents need to be able to work. Children with disabilities are impacted by social isolation and adjustment to virtual learning at a greater level than their non-disabled peers. As school districts plan for learning in the fall, they need to think beyond the school building and school staff to create a learning ecosystem that: follows public health safety protocols; keeps our children engaged and learning; and ensures that parents can work. We will need more space, more time, more educators, and more resources.

Schools need help, and afterschool programs and community-based organizations can answer that call for assistance. Afterschool, “out-of-school,” summer, expanded learning, and community-based programs (local providers, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, 4-H, Girls Inc, parks and rec, museums, religious centers, etc.) operate at the nexus of schools, families, and communities. Programs offer opportunities for youth to develop strong, trusting relationships that research shows can help buffer the impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma.[1] Students who participate regularly in quality afterschool programs show improved engagement indicators such as attendance, behavior, and coursework.[2] And programs provide spaces for deeper learning and for youth to use their talents, skills, and interests to innovate and thrive.[3]

Community partners will be critical in helping schools address the inequities that have been

exacerbated by COVID-19, providing academic, social, and emotional support to those students who need it most. During the pandemic, many afterschool and summer programs helped to lessen these gaps, continuing operations on-site and virtually and providing a foundation for a

redesigned learning day. Programs served as bridges between families and schools, providing the cultural and linguistic connections to help families understand new school procedures and access necessary resources in the community including food, health, and economic supports. Faith- based organizations and institutions, public libraries, museums of all types, institutions of higher education, local businesses, and other community-based organizations can all offer creative supports and physical spaces to support the needs of students and families.

This school year, as schools across the country are planning staggered schedules, hybrid

learning, and virtual learning to keep children, families, and our communities safe, the hours students are physically “out of school” will increase dramatically compared to previous school years.

We need to work together to tap all the assets in our communities to support children and

families, and involve afterschool and community partners in school reopening plans and implementation policies.

Together, we can ensure that  ***all*** our children are learning, safe, and engaged; that parents can

return to work; and that communities can rebuild their economic strength during the increased periods of “out-of-school time” in the new learning day. The full **Blueprint for How Afterschool Programs & Community Partners Can Help can be accessed** [**here.**](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Blueprint-for-How-Afterschool-Programs-Community-Partners-Can-Help.pdf)

Girl Scouts of the USA

Girls Inc.

Girls on the Run

Global Family Research Project Institute for Educational Leadership

International Association of Blacks in Dance

kid-grit

League of American Orchestras

Learning Policy Institute

MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership

National 4-H Council

National AfterSchool Association

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

National Association of Elementary School Principals National Association of Secondary School Principals National Girls Collaborative Project

National League of Cities

National Recreation and Park Association National Summer Learning Association National Youth Leadership Council Outward Bound USA

Rural School and Community Trust

Save the Children

School-Based Health Alliance

Search Institute

Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC) STEM Next Opportunity Fund

Teach for America

Techbridge

The Forum for Youth Investment

United Way Worldwide

US Chamber of Commerce Foundation

Write Brain

YMCA of the USA Young Rembrandts Youth Service America

Afterschool Alliance

After-School All-Stars

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

AlphaBEST Education, Inc. America SCORES

American Alliance of Museums

American Association for State and Local History

American Camp Association American Institutes for Research Americans for the Arts

America's Promise Alliance Association of Art Museum Directors Association of Children's Museums

Association of Science and Technology Centers Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

BOOST Collaborative

Boys and Girls Clubs of America

CampFire

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) Classroom, Inc

Coaching Corps

Coalition for Community Schools Committee for Children Communities in Schools

Council for Strong America

Education Redesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Education Trust

Every Child Matters

Every Hour Counts Excelencia in Education First Tee

Food Research & Action Center

Foundations, Inc

**National Organizations in Support**